

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Please cancel Claims 9, 10, 11, and 13 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

Please amend Claims 1-3, 7 and 8, and add new Claims 14-17 to read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method [for treating mastitis in a ruminant that suffers from mastitis, which comprises] of treating a lactating ruminant the milk of which contains a concentration of somatic cells that is symptomatic of mastitis, comprising the following step:

administering phytase to ~~said~~ the ruminant in an amount sufficient, and for a time sufficient, to lower the somatic cell concentration of the ruminant's milk to a level that is below that which is symptomatic of mastitis.

2. (Currently Amended) The method ~~for treating mastitis in mammals~~ of according to claim 1, which comprises administering feedstuff containing 50 to 5,000 units phytase per kg of dry feed matter.

3. (Currently Amended) The method ~~for treating mastitis of according to claim 1~~ to claim 2, wherein the ~~mammal~~ ruminant is a cow and the feedstuff is formula feed for dairy cows.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently Amended) The method ~~for treating mastitis in mammals~~  
~~of according to~~ claim 2, wherein the feedstuff comprises formula feed.

8. (Currently Amended) The method ~~for treating mastitis in mammals~~  
~~of according to~~ claim 2, wherein the feedstuff also comprises zinc methionine sulfate.

9, 10, 11, 12 and 13. (Cancelled)

14. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein the concentration of somatic cells in the milk of the lactating ruminant is more than  $2.5 \times 10^5$  cells/ml prior to treatment.

15. (New) The method according to claim 14, wherein the administration of the phytase is continued at least until the concentration of somatic cells in the milk of the lactating ruminant is less than  $2 \times 10^5$  cells/ml.

16. (New) The method according to claim 14, wherein the administration of the phytase is continued at least until the concentration of somatic cells in the milk of the lactating ruminant is less than  $1 \times 10^5$  cells/ml.

17. (New) A method of treating a dairy herd of lactating ruminants the milk of which is pooled, after it has been determined that their pooled milk has a concentration of somatic cells that is symptomatic of mastitis, which method comprises the step of:

administering phytase to the herd in an amount sufficient, and for a time sufficient, to lower the somatic cell concentration of the herd's pooled milk to a level that is below that which is symptomatic of mastitis.